



SRC CALENDAR

Monday, Feb. 13

9:00 a.m. Senate session and caucus

Tuesday, Feb. 14 - 5 p.m. cutoff for Senate bills

9:00 a.m. Senate session and caucus

Wednesday, Feb. 15 - Senate budget released

8:00 a.m. K-12 Committee SHR 1

Health & Long Term Care Committee SHR 4

Natural Resources Committee SHR 2

10:00 a.m. Senate session and caucus

1:30 p.m. Fin. Institutions Committee SHR 2

International Trade Committee SHR 3

Judiciary Committee SHR 1

Water, Energy & Enviro. Committee SHR 4

Thursday, Feb. 16

8:00 a.m. Government Ops Committee SHR 2

Human Services Committee SHR 1

Labor Committee SHR 4

Agriculture Committee SHR 3

10:00 a.m. Fin. Institutions Committee SHR 2

International Trade Committee SHR 3

Judiciary Committee SHR 1

Water, Energy & Enviro Committee SHR 4

1:30 p.m. K-12 Committee SHR 1

Health & Long Term Care Committee SHR 4

Natural Resources Committee SHR 2

3:30 p.m. Transportation Committee SHR 1

Ways & Means - hearing on budget SHR 4

Friday, Feb. 17

8:00 a.m. K-12 Committee SHR 1

10:00 a.m. Senate session and caucus

BUDGET TIME

The Senate supplemental budget proposal is expected next Wednesday and could be voted on by Friday. Members would have about 48 hours to figure out what is in it before being asked to vote. Last year's budget increased spending by 12 percent. Gov. Gregoire's 2006 supplemental budget proposal increases spending by 16.3 percent over the 2004 supplemental budget. We haven't seen that kind of drastic increase since the Lowry administration. Let's hope the Senate budget is more fiscally responsible.

COMMITMENT TO WASHINGTON

The Senate this week approved a package of **17 sex predator bills** including Republican proposals by **Sens. Stevens, Carrell, Roach & Benton**. But while the majority party did vote on sex offenders, it turned out to be considerably less serious about reforming our state's **flawed elections system**. Not one Republican proposal to clean up the voter rolls made it through committee.

Senate Bills 5008 (**Sen. Pflug**) and 6309 (**Sen. Carrell**), that would have eliminated the state's "death tax," died as well. The bill has not received a committee hearing in two years.

And after offering prior support, Democrats killed Senate Bill 6522 in the Rules Committee. The bill, which would offer more **transparency in election contributions**, came out of Rules on a second vote, but its future is still in question.

SRC IN THE NEWS

On near unanimous Senate approval to fund a study to determine how the state's minimum wage law is affecting businesses: "Initiative 688, approved by voters in 1998, tied the state's minimum wage to the rate of inflation. On Jan. 1, the wage rose to \$7.63 an hour, the highest in the nation. 'With Initiative 688, our state minimum wage is growing at a rate that has a very real effect on our businesses,' said **Sen. Linda Evans Parlette**." (*The Columbian*, 2-7-06)

On the failure to get a hearing on a bill that would have eliminated mandatory union dues state workers are being forced to pay at the risk of being fired: "'Didn't have any expectations it would,' **Sen. Jim Honeyford** said. The Democrats, who control both the House and Senate, have little interest in a bill opposed by organized labor which supports them, he said. Honeyford said he sponsored a bill on the issue to 'keep sending the message people are being displaced and losing their jobs over it.'" (*The Olympian*, 2/6/06)

Senate Republican Caucus Communications - To submit an item or correction, contact Rebecca Japhet at Japhet.Rebecca@leg.wa.gov or (360) 786-7516.